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**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A guide catheter comprising:

an elongated sheath having proximal end, a distal tip, and an inner channel to accommodate travel of a medical component;

a first material in the distal tip, wherein the first material is radio-opaque and echogenic; and

a second material in a wall of the sheath, wherein the second material is radio opaque a reinforcing braid formed within the sheath, wherein the braid includes a plurality of strands and at least one strand of the plurality of strands forming the reinforcing braid includes a radio-opaque material, and wherein jet-milled tungsten carbide particles are distributed within the polymeric material of the first material between approximately 70 to 75 percent by weight and have an average diameter approximately less than or equal to 500 nanometers.

2-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) The guide catheter of claim 4 claim 1, wherein the sheath includes a plurality of sheath segments extending along the length of the guide catheter, and each of the plurality of sheath segments is formed of a polymeric material containing jet-milled tungsten carbide particles.

Claim 10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) The guide catheter of claim 10 claim 1, wherein the radio- opaque material comprises a material selected from the group consisting of platinum iridium, gold, tantalum, platinum, and tungsten carbide.

12. (Currently Amended) A guide catheter comprising:

an elongated sheath having proximal end, a distal tip, and an inner lumen sized to accommodate travel of medical components; and

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a first material in the distal tip, wherein the first material is radio-opaque and echogenic, and includes jet-milled tungsten carbide particles having an average diameter of less than 500 nanometers, and wherein the tungsten carbide particles are distributed within the polymeric material in the amount of approximately 70 to 75 percent by weight.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 12, wherein the distal tip is formed of a polymeric material, and the first material comprises jet-milled tungsten carbide particles distributed within the polymeric material.

Claims 15-17 (Canceled)

18. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 14, wherein the sheath includes a number of sheath segments extending along the length of the guide catheter, and each of the sheath segments is formed of a polymeric material containing jet-milled tungsten carbide particles.

19. (Original) The guide catheter of claim 18, wherein the polymeric material comprises a polyether block amide.

20. (Currently Amended) A guide catheter comprising:  
an elongated sheath having proximal end and a distal tip;  
a first material forming the distal tip, wherein the first material is formed of a polymeric material and jet-milled tungsten carbide particles; and  
a second material forming a wall of the sheath, wherein the second material is formed of a polymeric material and jet-milled tungsten carbide particles are distributed within a first portion of the polymeric material of the second material in an amount between approximately 40 to 75 percent by weight.

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wherein the jet-milled tungsten carbide particles are distributed within the polymeric material of the first material between approximately 70 to 75 percent by weight and have an average diameter approximately less than or equal to 500 nanometers.

21. (Currently Amended) The guide catheter of claim 20, wherein the second material includes barium sulfate particles distributed within a second portion of the polymeric material of the second material different from the first portion.

Claim 22. (Canceled)

23. (Previously presented) The guide catheter of claim 20, wherein the jet-milled tungsten carbide particles have an average diameter approximately less than or equal to 500 nanometers.

24. (Previously presented) A guide catheter comprising:  
an elongated sheath having proximal end and a distal tip;  
a first material forming the distal tip, wherein the first material is formed of a polymeric material and jet-milled tungsten carbide particles; and  
a second material forming a wall of the sheath, wherein the second material is formed of a polymeric material and barium sulfate particles, and wherein the jet-milled tungsten carbide particles are distributed within the polymeric material of the first material between approximately 70 to 75 percent by weight and have an average diameter approximately less than or equal to 500 nanometers.